

# FORMER BUTCHERS MARKET HALL, TAVISTOCK, DEVON

(NGR SX 48327 74428)

Results of archaeological monitoring and recording

West Devon Borough Council planning reference 00749/2015,  
condition 8

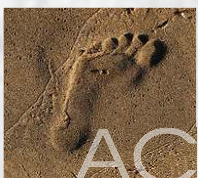
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Prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
A D Williams Building & Civil  
Engineering Contractors Ltd

Document No: ACD1448/2/0

Date: January 2017



AC archaeology

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### Acknowledgements

The recording was commissioned by A D Williams Building & Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd through Le Page Architects, and managed on behalf of Le Page Architects by Simon Crosbie. The fieldwork was carried out by Abigail Brown and Naomi Kysh. The illustrations for this report were prepared by Leon Cauchois.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

## Summary

*Monitoring and recording was carried out by AC archaeology in August and September 2016 at the Former Butchers Market Hall, Tavistock, Devon (NGR SX 48327 74428). The investigations were carried out during excavations for the lengthening of an internal ramp. The granite floor and later concrete ramp were recorded, and following their removal a stone and brick drainage channel, probably dating from the 19th century, was exposed.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording carried out by AC archaeology in August and September 2016 at the Former Butchers Market Hall, Tavistock, Devon (SX 48237 74428; Fig. 1). The investigations were commissioned by A D Williams Building & Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd on behalf of Tavistock Town Council, and were required under condition 8 of Listed Building Consent granted by West Devon Borough Council (reference 00749/2015) for alterations and repairs to building.

### 2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The building is situated within the historic core of Tavistock just outside the Great Court precinct of the medieval Tavistock Abbey, although it has been suggested that it may be located within the boundary of the earlier Saxon Abbey (Sturgess 2013, fig. 5). Between the 1830s and 1860s the road layout of the area of the former Abbey and surrounding land to the northeast and southwest was remodelled by the 6th and 7th Duke of Bedford. New buildings included the Corn Market in the 1830s, the Guildhall in the 1840s, and later the Town Hall and Pannier Market including the Butchers Hall (*ibid.*, 14).
- 2.2 The site lies within the Tavistock Conservation Area and area A10ii of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site. It forms part of a wider group of market buildings and civil buildings established for the landowner, the 7th Duke of Bedford. These buildings represent part of a wider 19th-century remodelling of the centre of Tavistock by the Dukes of Bedford financed by profits from their mineral wealth. The building is situated on the floodplain of the River Tavy at a height of around 80m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprises Carboniferous basaltic lava and Tuff of the Milton Abbot Formation overlain by Quaternary alluvium of clay, silt, sand and gravel.
- 2.3 The Former Butchers Market Hall (Devon County Historic Environment Record entry MDV100903) is a Grade II Listed Building of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (National Heritage List no. 1271408). The Listing description, prepared in 2001, is as follows:

Butchers' market. Circa 1860, for the 7th Duke of Bedford. Hurdwick stone rubble with granite and yellow brick dressings. Slate roofs with stone-coped gables at SE end and hipped at NW end.

PLAN: Two parallel ranges on NW-SE axis, cranked to ESE at SE end.

EXTERIOR: Single storey. SE end to Market Road, two bays with twin gables; tall vehicular entrances on ground floor with yellow brick depressed 2-centred arches and plank glazed

doors; similarly arched windows above in gables. NW elevation facing Pannier Market has two smaller depressed 2-centred arch entrances infilled with shop fronts. Along ridge of roofs louvred ventilators.

Interior open to braced tie-rod roofs.

NOTE: Built in about 1860 by the 7th Duke of Bedford as part of a development which included the Pannier Market, Town Hall, shops on Duke Street and the Police Station.

- 2.4** The *Design, Access and Heritage Statement* for the works (Le Page Architects 2013) provides more information on the design of the building than outlined in the Listed Building description. It notes that the building retains almost all of the original butchers' tables, as well as its other architectural fixtures and fittings. The document also includes an extract from the original architect's floor plan for the building, and it is clear from this how it formed part of the wider Pannier Market development.

### **3. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1** The monitored works involved the removal of a small area of historic granite slabs and their reuse within a re-profiled ramp. The aims of the investigation were firstly to prepare an archaeological record of the floor prior to removal, and secondly to monitor the works to record below-ground archaeological deposits associated with either the 19th-century market building or any earlier archaeology of the town (including the medieval abbey).
- 3.2** All works were carried out in accordance with an approved written scheme of investigation prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2016). A plan of the existing floor in the area of the groundworks was made at a scale of 1:20. Following initial removal of the granite slabs and reduction in ground level the trench was cleaned by hand and a test pit hand excavated to investigate the depth of archaeological deposits. The excavation was recorded at scales of 1:20 (plan) and 1:10 (section). All elements were accompanied by a digital photographic record.

### **4. RESULTS (Figs 2-4; Plates 1-4)**

- 4.1** The ramp was located within the current northern range of the building, described on the original floor plan as 'northern stalls'. Both ranges were provided with doors in their southeast elevation onto what is now Market Road, these being the only external access into the building; doors in the northwest elevation led into the centre of the market (Fig. 2). The groundworks covered an area measuring 5m long by 3m wide located adjacent to the double doors within the northern range. Removal of the slabs and underlying deposits was undertaken by hand.
- 4.2** The granite slabs (104) varied in size from between 0.48m long by 0.30m wide to 1.40m long by 0.60m wide, and were up to 0.22m thick. The existing concrete ramp was located adjacent to the doorway and measured up to 3.45m long by 2.95m wide (Fig. 3; Plates 1 and 2).
- 4.3** Following removal of the granite slabs the ground was reduced to a total depth of 0.30m from the surface. This exposed a deposit of mid brownish-grey loose silty-loam with abundant slate, sub-angular and rounded stone, brick and mortar inclusions (100). Finds recovered from this layer comprised one piece of clay tobacco pipe stem (weighing 1g), two pieces of 19th- or early 19th-century English green hand-blown

bottle glass (54g), a 19th-century tea cup handle (7g), 1 fragment of unidentifiable animal bone (1g) and a fragment of oyster shell (1g).

- 4.4** Drain F102 was set into 100 with a trench (F103), and was aligned northwest to southeast, i.e. orientated to drain out of the door onto Market Sheet (Plate 3). Its position corresponded with a narrow drain (central to the range) present between the granite slabs further to the northwest but not within eastern part of the building (Plate 4). (A wider, better-defined drain is present in the southern range.) A 2m long section was exposed, and it measured 0.50m wide (up to 0.25m internally) by 0.16m deep. It was constructed of two courses of standard bricks, bonded with lime mortar, laid onto a slate base, and with slate packing laid onto the bricks. The drain contained a single fill (101) consisting of dark brown-grey, friable slightly sandy loam with occasional small sub-angular gravel inclusions. Six fragments of unidentifiable animal bone (9g) were recovered from this fill.
- 4.5** A hand-dug test pit was excavated through 100 to assess the deposit sequence. Deposit 100 measured up to 500mm deep, and overlaid 105, which was only partially exposed. This comprised a light grey friable clay with small gravel inclusions. During the subsequent ground reduction only layer 100 was impacted.

## **5. COMMENTS**

- 5.1** A record of part of the original 1860s granite floor of the Former Butchers Hall was made prior to its removal. The underlying deposit 100 was almost certainly an associated levelling deposit. The drain (F102) set within 100 is also contemporary with the Butchers Hall and represents part of a larger drainage run within the northern range, part of which is still exposed within the floor surface.
- 5.2** A test pit showed that an archaeological sequence continued below 100, but the present works would only impact on the 19th-century surface, drain F102 and make-up layer 100.

## **6. ARCHIVE AND OASIS ENTRY**

- 6.1** The digital archive comprising the borne-digital data will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.
- 6.2** An OASIS entry for the project, which includes a digital copy of this report, has been completed using the unique identifier 273499.

## **7. SOURCES CONSULTED**

Le Page Architects, 2013, *Butchers Hall Tavistock: Design, Access and Heritage Statement*

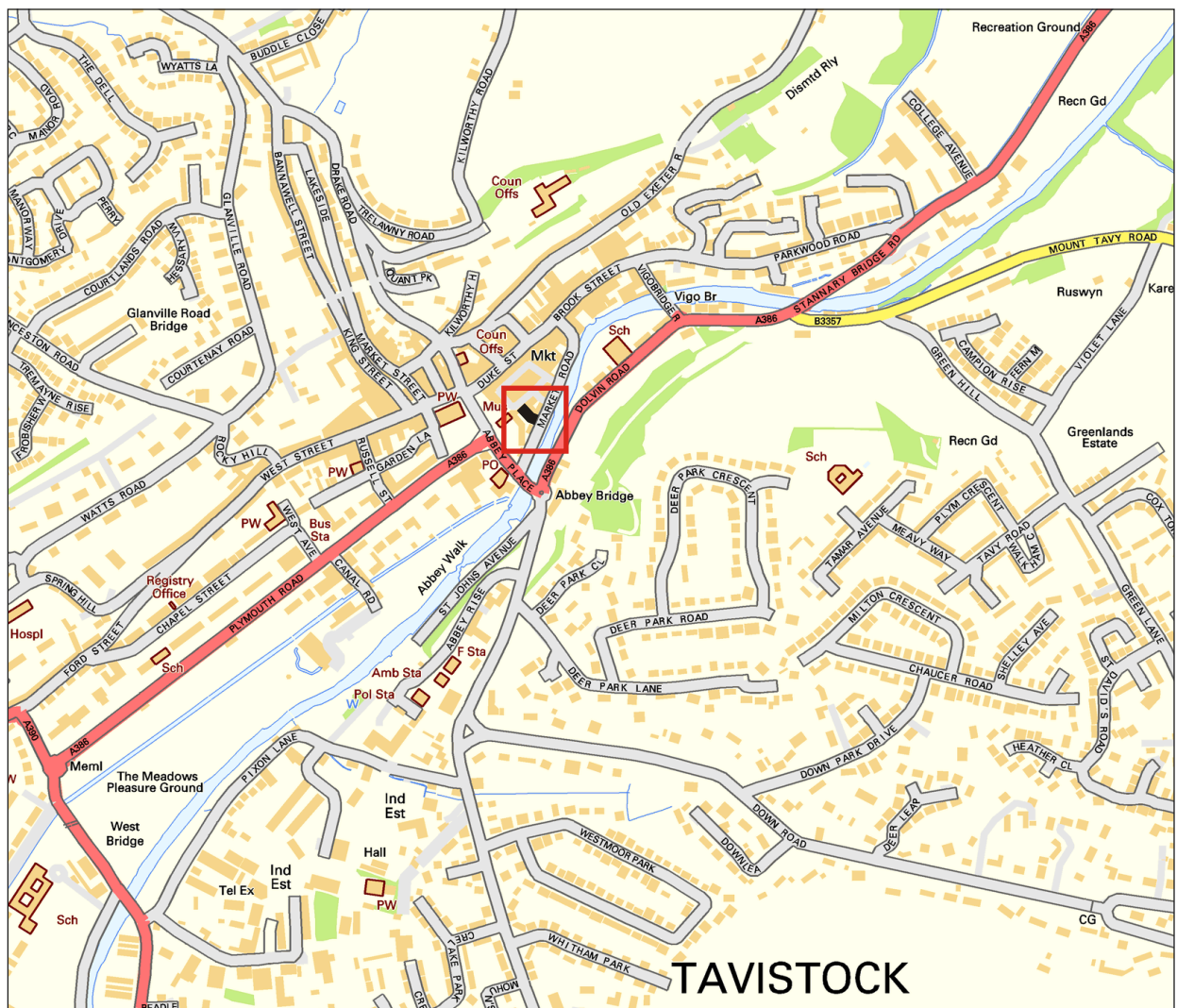
Passmore, A., 2016, *Former Butchers Market Hall, Tavistock, Devon, (NGR SX 48237 74428), Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording, West Devon Borough Council planning reference 00749/2015, condition 8, AC archaeology document no. ACD1448/1/0*

Sturgess, J., 2013, *Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey, Tavistock*, Cornwall Council Historic Environment Projects report no. **2013R086**





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PROJECT

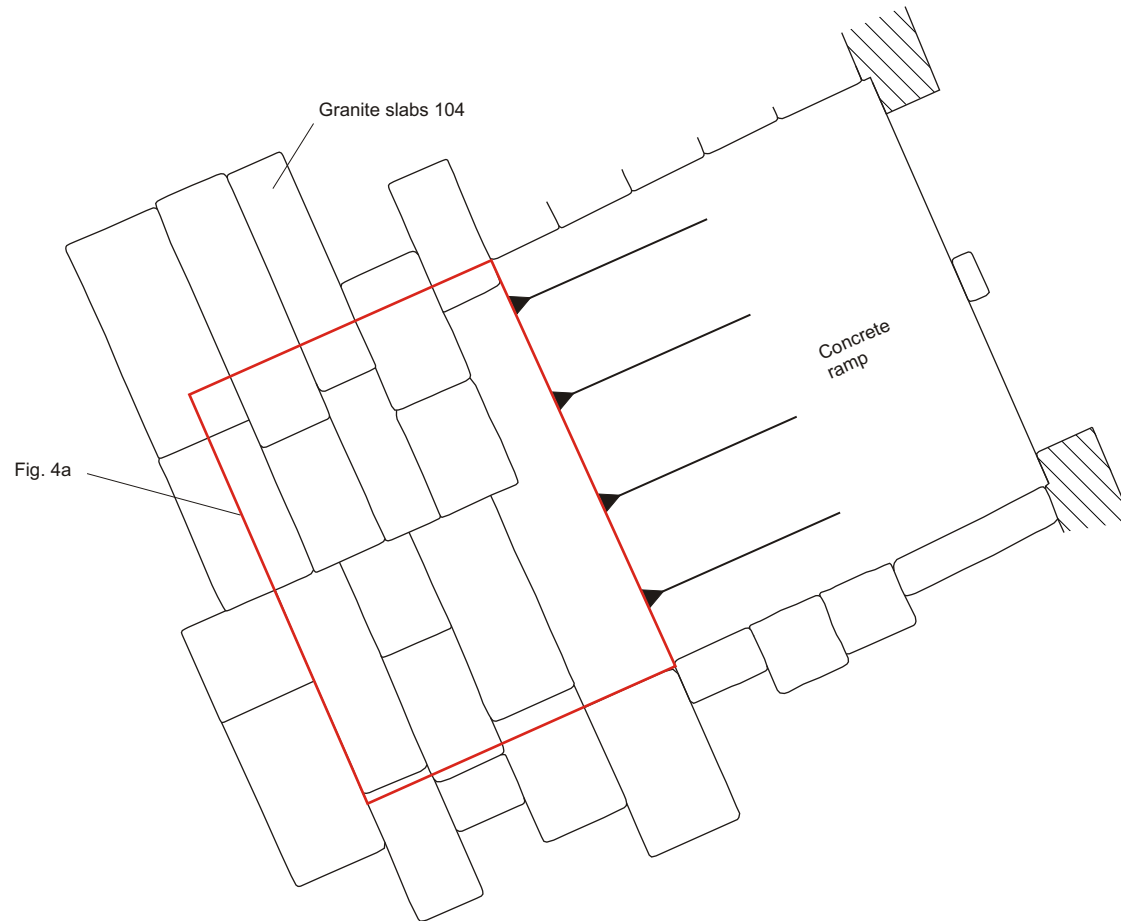
Former Butchers Market Hall, Tavistock, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location







PROJECT

Former Butchers Market Hall,  
Tavistock, Devon

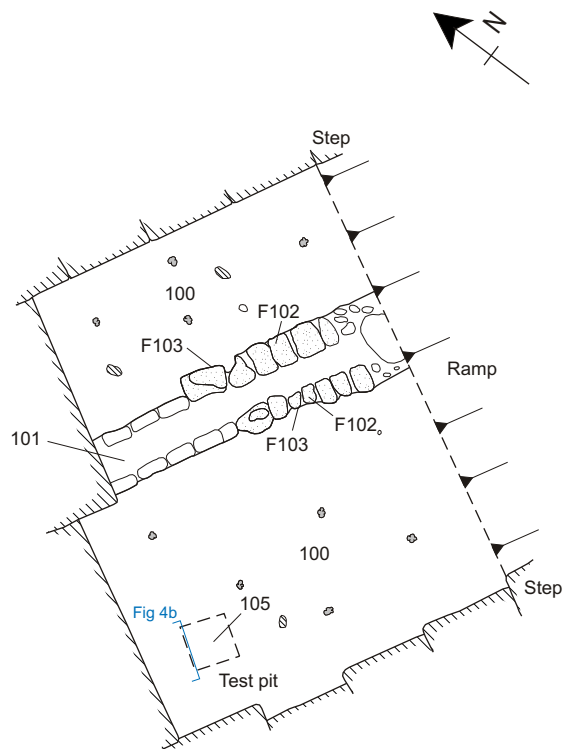
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Fig. 3: Plan of the floor

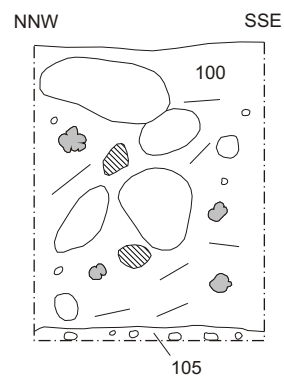


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
a) Plan of area of removed setts



b) Section of test pit



Key

-  Stones
-  Brick
-  Mortar bonding to drain
-  Mortar
-  Slate

0 3m  
Scale 1:50@A4  
Plan

0 1m  
Scale 1:10@A4  
Section

PROJECT

Former Butchers Market Hall,  
Tavistock, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 3: Plan of excavation and  
section through test pit



Plate 1: General shot of granite floor 104, looking east-southeast. (1m scale)



Plate 2: Close-up view of the granite floor 104, looking east-southeast. (1m scale)





Plate 3: Drain F102, looking west-northwest. (1m scale)

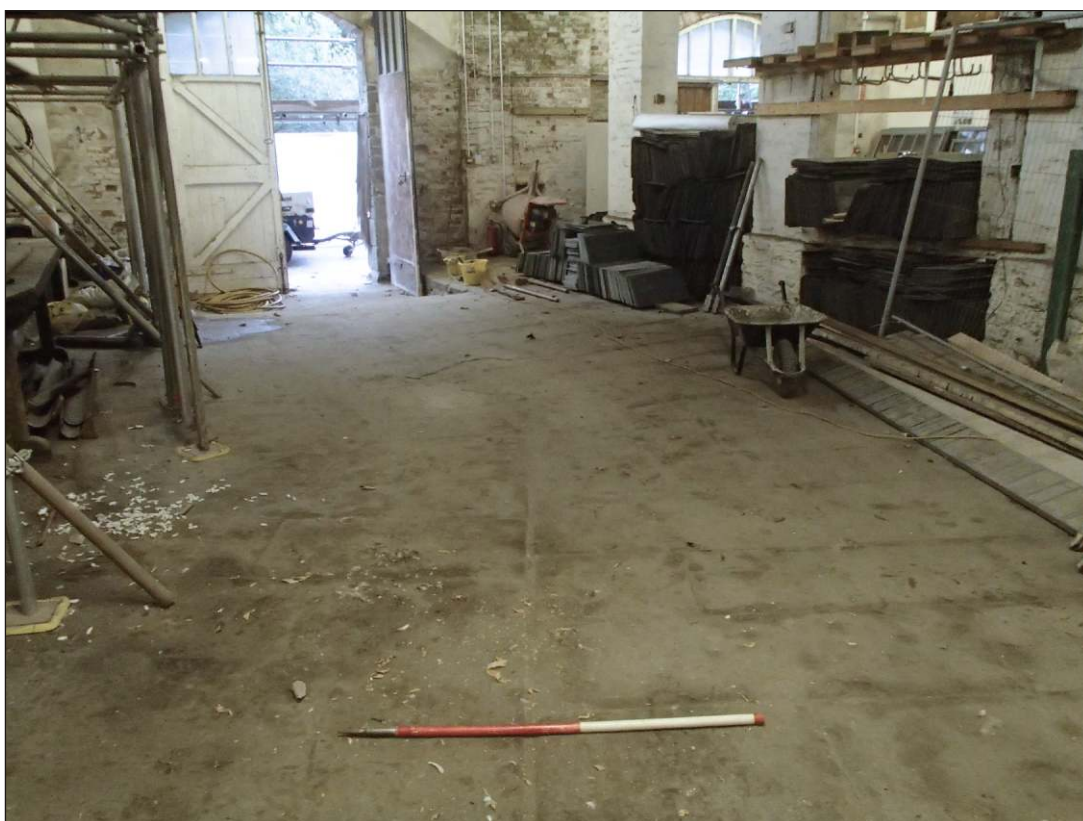


Plate 4: The north range showing the drain in the floor, looking southeast. (1m scale)

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